

## San Jose 2020 General Plan Sustainable City Major Strategy

The Sustainable City Major Strategy is a statement of San Jose's desire to become an environmentally and economically sustainable city. A "sustainable city" is a city designed, constructed, and operated to minimize waste, efficiently use its natural resources and to manage and conserve them for the use of present and future generations. San José acknowledges that it exists within both a regional and global environment. Its decisions regarding natural resources will have impacts outside the City's jurisdiction, and the decisions of others in the region and beyond will impact the City's ability to meet its future needs. San José will encourage and participate in cooperative/regional efforts intended to improve the quality of air and water and to conserve land, soil, water, energy and ecosystems such as the Bay, forests, riparian corridors, fisheries, grasslands, etc.

The strategy seeks to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, wastefulness, and environmental degradation of our living environment. By conserving natural resources and preserving San José's natural living environment, the concept of sustainability becomes a means of encouraging and supporting a stronger economy and improving the quality of life for all who live and work in San José.

As the City's guide for growth and development, the General Plan is a unique tool for ensuring that future planning efforts minimize impacts on resource consumption and help maintain the City's overall quality of life. The successful creation of a more sustainable urban form will also help ensure that the City is able to maintain the infrastructure and services necessary to sustain San Jose's economy and quality of life.

The City operates many programs that promote the wise use of natural resources and are intended to move San José towards sustainability. These programs include recycling, waste disposal, water conservation, transportation demand management, transportation systems management, energy efficiency, and preventive maintenance of the built environment. In addition, the City also oversees hazardous materials storage, offers toxic waste minimization and pollution prevention programs, and is responsible for wastewater treatment and reclamation. The Sustainable City Major Strategy is intended to support all of these efforts by ensuring that the urban form is designed and built in a manner consistent with the objectives of efficient resource use and environmental protection.

General Plan policies specifically address issues related to efficiency in resource consumption. Green Building and site design policies improve energy, water efficiency, and reduce consumption and waste. Water resources policies address the need for the conservation and protection of watershed and groundwater recharge areas. Air quality policies require the City to regulate the sources of air pollution and monitor the cumulative impacts of development on air quality. The Greenline/Urban Growth Boundary, the Urban Service Area and the Natural Resource policies promote the efficient use of land and prevent urban sprawl, conserve open spaces and preserve pristine natural habitats. In addition, the General Plan's continued emphasis on land use related issues such as achieving a relative job/housing balance and orienting development around transit facilities contributes to sustainability by shortening trip lengths and helping to increase the availability and convenience of transit, biking and walking. This conserves energy and improves water and air quality.

By promoting the importance of conservation and preservation of natural resources in the City, the Sustainable City Major Strategy works with the other major strategies of the General Plan to ensure that San José will be able to provide urban services to its residents in the most efficient manner possible, and that the City will have its best chance to sustain adequate level of services into the future.